

BILL # HB 2025

TITLE: Arizona medical board: omnibus

SPONSOR: Hanson

STATUS: As Introduced

REQUESTED BY: Senate

PREPARED BY: John Malloy

FISCAL ANALYSIS

Description

HB 2025 would establish the Physician Health Program (PHP) within the Arizona Medical Board. PHP would assist physicians in managing mental, behavioral and physical health issues that interfere with an individual's practice of medicine. The program would seek to assist physicians who exhibit dysfunctional and disruptive behaviors which do not rise to an official board complaint. The participating physician would pay for the cost of evaluation and treatment. The board would evaluate a participating physician for eligibility, assist in establishing the treatment and monitor the physician once in the program. HB 2025 would enable the board to allocate up to \$40 from each \$500 biennial license renewal fee to fund the program.

Estimated Impact

Given the provision to dedicate a portion of existing license fees to this new program, the bill would allow the board to use as much as \$376,000 for its operation. The JLBC Staff estimates a program cost of \$156,000 from the Arizona Medical Board Fund.

The board believes that there would be no fiscal impact to HB 2025 and that they would be able to administer the program with current resources and requiring no additional funding.

Analysis

The board currently administers a similar program to the proposed PHP program called the Monitored Aftercare Program (MAP). MAP oversees the care and treatment of physicians that have substance abuse issues, using 2 FTE Positions and a contract with 2 addictionology specialists for approximately \$256,000 a year to run the program. There are currently 90 physicians and 8 physician assistants in MAP, for a cost of \$2,600 per physician. In this program, approximately half of the physicians enter the program voluntarily with the other half being referred by another medical professional. Like the proposed PHP Program, the MAP Program is funded by allocating up to \$40 from each \$500 biennial license renewal fee.

The board estimates that 30 physicians would enter the proposed program voluntarily. The board does not have an estimate for how many physicians would be referred by another medical professional. Assuming participation levels similar to the MAP program (where half of the program's total consists of physicians that self report), JLBC Staff estimates that a total of 60 physicians would be served by the program. Using the same cost per physician estimate from the MAP program (\$2,600 per physician), JLBC Staff estimates a cost of \$156,000 for the proposed PHP program.

The board maintains that the proposed PHP Program would not have the same costs as the MAP Program, because the treatment of addiction is more intense and requires more oversight than problems associated with mental, physical and behavioral ailments. Therefore, the board believes that the PHP Program would not require an aftercare program like in the MAP Program. Physicians eligible for the proposed PHP Program could have a multitude of ailments including bipolar disorder, dementia, psychotic disorder and sexual misconduct. As a result, it is possible that a physician suffering from any of the above ailments may require the same aftercare component as those physicians with alcohol and drug dependencies, resulting in an overall cost to administer the program.

Local Government Impact

There is no fiscal impact to local governments in HB 2025.